



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

HIGH-SCHOOL READING: THE NEWARK PLAN

GRACE THOMPSON
Free Public Library, Newark, N.J.

More than half of the pupils who enter the high schools of the larger American cities have never handled critically as many books as are found on high-school library shelves. They have learned to read in primary schools; read the required books in the grammar grades; become familiar with school or classroom libraries, and possibly used the children's room of a public library; there acquaintance with books ceased for the obvious reason that first-generation Americans do not find a library at home. But, having acquired the ability to read, they do not and cannot stop reading. Their taste is being gradually formed or deformed by the reading of cheap newspapers and cheaper literature at home and on the streets. The corner candy-store sells nickel weeklies and lurid paper-bound books containing tales of thrilling adventure and continuous excitement. Penny dailies provide romance, scandal, and shallow philosophy, until the ability to read becomes more of a danger than a blessing. The result is apparent when boys who cannot be interested in *Ivanhoe* are found with *A Boy on the Curb*, or, *The Secret of a Treasury Note* among their schoolbooks. High-school teachers insist that the average entering student cannot name ten worthy books.

The teacher in the high school is, then, confronted with two problems. He must teach the use of books, and he must create a taste for good reading. Unless our high schools do something like this for their graduates, the four years will be wasted.

The English department of the Newark High School, realizing these conditions, began some years ago to compile a list of books for distribution to the pupils, and to buy the books listed for the high-school library shelves. Year by year, as experience dictated, the teachers added to and eliminated from this list until it reached its present form, a thirty-page pamphlet, *Reading for Pleasure and*

Profit, A List of Certain Books Which Young People Find Entertaining, Being Chiefly Books Which Older Readers Enjoyed When They Were Young, published by the Free Public Library. The list is the tangible expression of genuine co-operation between the high school and the library. In 1909 the library offered to annotate and print the list, and to provide copies for distribution. The library is careful to buy enough copies to provide for the demand, and to keep them in a special case at the main library reserved for high-school students.

The list was at first distributed to the several classes in sheets. Experience has shown that the list as a whole is more highly prized by the students. Receiving this list in the first year and noting books read through the course, they possess at graduation an enjoyable record of their own reading for four years.

From fifty to one hundred books are suggested for each year. By actually sending pupils to the shelves to select a book from those suggested, overcoming inertia in some and a possible timidity in others, the reading habit is often developed. The student has an opportunity to handle and to examine carefully a great many books that are new to him, and to discover his own taste in reading.

Each student in each term is to report to his instructor in English on one book of fiction, one of non-fiction, and one poem, read during the term, from the list provided. The list from which he is to choose is broad. For the first term, when the desire for reading must to an extent be created, the list is longer and broader than in the succeeding terms. Strange would be the boy or the girl who in this alcove would find nothing to catch the eye and stay the hand.

SEA ADVENTURE

Kidnapped, ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

Captains Courageous, RUDYARD KIPLING.

PIONEER LIFE

The Last of the Mohicans, JAMES FENIMORE COOPER.

The Deerslayer, JAMES FENIMORE COOPER.

NEW ENGLAND LIFE

The House of the Seven Gables, NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.

Twice-told Tales, NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.

BRIGHT YOUNG PEOPLE

Off the Skelligs, JEAN INGELOW.
A Jolly Fellowship, FRANK R. STOCKTON.

GIRL LIFE

An Old-Fashioned Girl, LOUISA M. ALCOTT.
Little Women, LOUISA M. ALCOTT.
The Biography of a Prairie Girl, ELEANOR GATES.
The Doctor's Daughter, REBECCA SOPHIA CLARKE.
A Summer in Leslie Goldthwaite's Life, ADELINE D. T. WHITNEY.
Real Folks, ADELINE D. T. WHITNEY.
Square Pegs, ADELINE D. T. WHITNEY.

BOY LIFE

Tom Brown's School Days, THOMAS HUGHES.
Against Heavy Odds, HJALMAR H. BOYESSEN.
Modern Vikings, HJALMAR H. BOYESSEN.
Boyhood in Norway, HJALMAR H. BOYESSEN.
Two Little Savages, ERNEST THOMPSON-SETON.
Being a Boy, CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER.
Boys of Other Countries, BAYARD TAYLOR.
Indian Boyhood, CHARLES A. EASTMAN.
Phaeton Rogers, ROSSITER JOHNSON.
Dab Kinzer: The Story of a Growing Boy, WILLIAM OSBORN STODDARD.

A collection of interesting books in the first year, the list increases in literary and critical value to the fourth year, presupposing on the part of the student a proportionate increase in appreciation of style and spirit.

PEOPLE WORTH KNOWING

Life of Alfred Tennyson, HALLAM TENNYSON.
Letters and Memorials of Jane Welsh Carlyle.
Reminiscences, THOMAS CARLYLE.
Praeterita, JOHN RUSKIN.
Anne Gilchrist, Her Life and Writings, Edited by H. H. GILCHRIST.
Autobiography of Harriet Martineau.
Letters of Celia Thaxter.
Life and Letters of George Eliot.
Life of William Morris, JOHN WILLIAM MACKAIL.
Vailima Letters, ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.
Life of Alice Freeman Palmer, G. H. PALMER.
The Gentlest Art, EDWARD VERRALL LUCAS.
Book of the Sonnet, LEIGH HUNT.

Heroes and Hero Worship, THOMAS CARLYLE.

Virginibus Puerisque, ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

The Life of the Spirit in the Modern English Poets, VIDA D. SCUDDER.

English Composition, BARRETT WENDELL.

By comparing this list with the required English work of secondary schools, it will be seen that the selection is by no means confined to collateral reading, and that no attempt is made to keep the student to one period or one form of literature. For example, in the first half-year high-school pupils study Hawthorne's *Tanglewood Tales* and Bryant's *Translation of the Odyssey*. The list of eighty-five titles includes only three stories and ten descriptive works on the mythology, folklore, and customs of the Greeks, and ten poems embodying Greek myths.

"The mark of high-school teaching is uniformity; the mark of genius is difference. The slogan of high-school teaching is drill, repetition. The essential of literary enjoyment is surprise, novelty, movement. The natural stimulus of good reading is in its creation of a desire to read the book through. The scholar's method is to hold you to the book so long that you are sick and tired of it." So said Principal McAndrew in a recent address. There is no doubt that the present intensive laboratory method of teaching English, perhaps necessary with classes and curriculum overcrowded, does not make even Greek literature the source of joy it should be to the average young person. If all reading is confined to one subject, and no other and lighter reading suggested, books grow distasteful by very insistence, thereby defeating the probable purpose of the study of literature. Reading from choice from such an inclusive list allows the pupil to follow his own bent, and so creates a prejudice for, instead of against, the book.

Having read and enjoyed these books, the pupil can, and often does, read something better. Certainly the reading of six pieces of genuine literature every year for four years—and we can expect little more from the growing boys and girls of this busy world—ought consciously or unconsciously to give such a reader a basis for judgment and comparison. Teachers who have used this list believe that it does one other and better thing; it creates a positive distaste for poor and vulgar forms of writing.